Americal headquarters ETS's

By MSG Bill Pickett

CHU LAI (Special) – "Four year ago the Americal Division was born in battle ... in one of the most violently contested areas of Vietnam. Today we look back with satisfaction at the complete accomplishment of our mission."

With these words Major General Frederick J. Kroesen, 23d Infantry Division (Americal) commander, set the stage for the standdown of the division headquarters, the last in the division to case its colors.

The division awards ceremony Nov. 11 at Chu Lai climaxed four years of battle for the Americal Division, at one time the largest division in the Army, with the largest Tactical Area of Interest in Vietnam. More than 100,000 men served with the division in the southern portion of Military Region I during that time, helping to drive the enemy out of the populated coastal plain and mountain settlements and training Regional and Popular Forces.

"Those who have served honorably with this division have earned a self-satisfaction and pride that comes from serving with the best, and attaining the most difficult goals," the general noted.

He did not sidestep the fact that members of the division share collectively an unfortunate reputation,"... caused by the few in our numbers who make mistakes, some tragic, some careless, some notorious."

"But," he added, "we share also the credit for an unexcelled record and uncounted throusands of acts of valor, acts of compassion and a significant contribution to the attainment of the objectives of the United States in this war."

Participating in the ceremony were infantrymen from the three brigades of the division: the 11th, 196th and 198th; artillerymen representing the Americal Division Artillery; aviation personnel of the 16th Combat Aviation Group; and men of many skills from the Division Support Command. Also represented was the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry; 26th Engineer Battalion and the 523d Signal Battalion.

General Creighton W. Abrams, CG, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, was the reviewing officer. Sharing the reviewing stand with General Abrams and General Kroesen were Lieutenent General Hoang Xuan Lam, CG, I Corps and Military Region 1; Lieutenant General William J. McCaffery, deputy CG, U.S. Army, Vietnam; Lieutenant General Welborn G. Dolvin, CG, XXIV Corps; and Major General Nguyen Van Toan, CG, 2d ARVN Infantry Division.

Brigadier General Bertram K. Gorwitz, assistant division commander, was Commander of Troops.

During the ceremony Americal soldiers were presented U.S. and Vietnamese decorations. They were representative of the many members of the division who have been cited for gallantry during their tours with the Americal.

Since the unit was activated in 1967, nine Americal soldiers have earned the Medal of Honor, and the Division was decorated with its second Vietnamese Cross of Gallentry with Palm.

Capping the colorful ceremony witnessed by several hundred spectators, General Kroesen, assisted by General Toan, unveiled a monument dedicated to soldiers of the Americal Division "... who joined forces with soldiers of the 2d ARVN Infantry Division to battle a common enemy during the years 1967 to 1971."

A part of the inscription on the bronze plaque mounted on the cement monument read: "This monument stands as a memorial to the sacrifices made by members of the Americal Division during this struggle, and it endures as a symbol of hope for the ultimate achievement of self-determination for all the people of Vietnam."

With the dedication of the memorial, the standdown ceremony for the Americal Division was ended.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 4, No. 45 Da Nang, Vietnam November 26, 1971

Final division standdown scheduled at Ft. Lewis

By MSG Bill Pickett

CHU LAI (S pecial) – The actual standdown of the 23d Infantry Division will not be accomplished until the last days of this month when the division command group will accompany the colors to Ft. Lewis, Wash., for the official deactivation of the unit and the retirement of the colors.

That action will bring to a close an enormous redeployment task which began in earnest with the announcement of the standdown of the 3d Battalion, 18th Artillery and the 71st Assault Helicopter Company on Sept. 8.

Planning for the entire operation began much earlier under the supervision of the Keystone Operations Center, whose personnel were responsible for the coordination and scheduling of all standdown activities.

A personnel out-processing center was established adjacent to the Chu Lai Airfield, and this operation, although deterred one day when Typhoon Hester leveled the center, averaged 200 persons per day through its doors, destined for reassignment in-country or return to CONUS for further assignment or ETS.

Also in September, units of the 23d Medical Battalion, and maintenance and engineer companies began standdown, many utilizing the facilities of the Division Combat Center or the former 27th Surgical Hospital area through which most of the division members would pass during their standdown period. These locations were provided exchange and club facilities to serve Americal soldiers during their standdown.

On Sept. 17, H Troop, 17th Cavalry began its standdown, and during October most maneuver elements of the division also began their standdown operations.

It was during this period that Task Force Americal began to take shape under the command of Colonel Robert J. Malloy, former DISCOM commander. Mission of Task Force Americal (TFA) was to prevent the enemy from establishing bases from

continued on page 2

MOVING S YMBOL -- Stacks and stacks of crates and crates are piled high with the equipment and supplies of the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) ready to be moved. Crates such as these have become an increasingly familiar sight to men of the Americal, many of whom have been packing their bags in recent weeks to be transferred to other units or to go home. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

This is the last issue of the *Southern Cross* newspaper, however, a *Charger* newspaper will be published by the 10th Public Information Detachment of the 196th Infantry Brigade beginning Dec. 1971.

STANDDOWN PRESS CONFERENCE--Some 25 newsmen interview Major General Frederick J. Kroesen, CG 23d Infantry Division (Americal), following standown ceremonies for Headquarters of the Americal Nov. 11. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

$1400 collected for Carson Scout

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. 10) – Nguyen Quan, a Kit Carson Scout, was "devoted to his job, a damn good man", according to Sergeant First Class Charles Davis, (Uniontown, Pa.) and the rest of the men of the Aero Rifle "Blues" Platoon, F Troop, 8th Cavalry.

Quan had worked with the Blues for about three months and had made about 25 insertions. He had found a couple boobytraps and was responsible for finding and capturing high-level enemy signal documents and signal operation instructions.

He helped the guys in the Blues Platoon with work details and participated in alerts, but he didn't have to.

He lived with the members of the platoon-rarely taking a day off, according to Sergeant Thomas Hopper (Staybon, Ore.).

On Aug. 14, Quan was badly injured by the explosion of an anti-personnel mine while he and the Blues were on their way to a PZ (pick-up zone) after an insertion. He lost both his legs.

Quan's American friends felt a great sense of loss, and they jointly decided to do something for Quan.

The members of the platoon decided to present Quan with a gift of money raised by members of F Troop. The campaign was soon expanded to include the entire 123d Aviation Battalion.

The efforts of the platoon gained $1400 for Quan. The money was presented by Captain Thomas M. Hayes (Annedale, Md.) on behalf of the Blues.

Hospital conveys 'thank you'

Hoa Khanh Children's Hospital

A Project of World Relief Commission

5 November 1971

Brigadier General McDonough
Deputy Commander
23rd Infantry Division

Dear Sir:

Please convey to the officers and men of the 23rd Infantry Division our gratitude for their recent generous donation to Hoa Khanh Children's Hospital. With such a large contribution as $400, we can proceed more quickly to accomplish many things around the hospital - such as digging a water well, buying equipment and supplies, or constructing necessary facilities.

We are also thankful for those men of your division who have given of their time and abilities to aid us as we minister to the children. Because of their help we are better able to serve the people of this area.

Again, we thank you and those under you for your expressions of interest.

Sincerely,

Robert G Long

Robert G. Long, M.D.
Director

FOUR-STAR GREETING--Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Thomas H. Moorer shakes hands with men of the 196th Infantry Brigade on LZ (landing zone) Linda Nov. 5. Admiral Moorer toured a number of American bases in Vietnam during his most recent visit to Southeast Asia. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Changes initiated in Project Transition

By SP4 Sam Rousso

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. I0) -- Some changes have been made in Project Transition, says Mr. G.A. Pierce, transition counselor for the U.S. Office of Education and Welfare.

The basic purpose of Project Transition is still to "encourage the serviceman who lacks civilian job skills to train for a field which will permit his ready access to employment," says Pierce. The change is in the "recruiting" program.

Under the new policy, each battalion size unit will have a Project Transition coordinator who will identify and notify those eligible for the program of their status and tell them of a group counseling session which is compulsory.

After the group session, if the potential "enlistee" can ask for an individual session, at which time he can ask for more detailed information and start filling out forms.

"The individual is free to accept or reject Project Transition at any time," Pierce stressed.

In addition, Pierce outlined another program for servicemen. It's called Serviceman Early Education Counseling (SSEEC).

This program informs the active-duty soldier of the costs and location of schools he might be interested in.

In addition, such things as letters of recommendation, admission applications and financial aids may be obtained through the program. Entrance tests, including the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) may also be taken prior to ETS .

"We hope to try to be able to place an applicant in any school," says Pierce.

Positive action saves life of fellow soldier

By SP4 Bill Simpson

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. I0) – Positive action rather than panic, a soldier who had first aid knowledge and put it into practice, and a life is saved.

On a partly cloudy Sunday afternoon earlier this year in the Personnel Management section at 23d Infantry Division (Americal) headquarters, a specialist four ex-grunt become clerk, was sitting at his desk typing out another 201 form...and another and another. He sat back as if to admire his work and rest his eyes.

Within five seconds he was on the floor, unconscious, the victim of an epileptic seizure. His heart was at a standstill and his tongue slipped back across his windpipe. All life processes had stopped–his lips began to turn blue, his eyes swelled and all the joints and muscles tightened. There wasn't much time.

One husky buck sergeant, Harry D. Todd (Madisonville, Ky.), whose military occupational specialty was to process personnel forms rather than save lives, recognized the symptoms immediately. His first thought was to apply mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration, but the victim's jaws were locked with the tension of the seizure. Todd applied pressure to both sides of the man's jaw and pulled down and up and sideways but the victim's teeth remained clamped.

In less time than it has taken to read this, Sergeant Todd had grabbed a 12-inch medal ruler off of a desk at hand and forced it between the victim's rearmost molars. Then, as if his life depended upon it, and by this time indeed the victim's did, the burly sergeant gave one gigantic twist of the foot long metal bar.

Then came mouth-to-mouth resuscitation; four stiff thrusts above the heart and it was shocked back into operation.

From that point forward the medics took over. The Specialist four was rushed off to the 91st Evacuation Hospital and the following day was well enough to talk to Sergeant Todd from his bedside.

He returned to the Personnel Management section two weeks later on medication, and continued hammering out those forms until his tour in Vietnam ended Oct. 28.

Sergeant Tood also has since shipped back home to a new stateside assignment. This man is not a medic, not even a combat arms trooper, but a personnel specialist.

Before Sergeant Todd departed here, he would only say about this incident that he did what any man would have done and that he was lucky that there was a metal ruler handy.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Major Michael J. Williams . . . . . Information Officer
First Lieutenant V. Kent Flanagan . . . . . .Officer-in-Charge
Sergeant Mark A. Schulz . . . . . Editor

Official standdown slated at Ft. Lewis

continued from page 1

which to rocket Chu Lai Combat Base and to keep the enemy from massing troops for attack.

Major units standing down during October included 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry and 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry on Oct. 5, and 3d Battalion, 1st Infantry and the 123d Assault Support Helicopter Company Oct. 7.

The 11th Brigade and its 1st Battalion, 52d Infantry began standdown on Oct. 10. Two aviation battalions, the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion and 123d Aviation Battalion, went into standdown on Oct. 14.

Between Oct. 15 and 18, the 4th Battalion, 3d Infantry; 174th Assualt Helicopter Company and 23d Medical Battalion, minus, commenced standdown.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, of the 198th Infantry Brigade began standdown Oct. 19, followed on Oct. 22 by 23d Administrative Company and on Oct. 23 by the 16th Combat Aviation Group.

Between Oct. 24 and 30, those units of Division Artillery which had not begun standdown were returned to rear areas to begin processing, and on Oct. 30, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery of Division Artillery closed out its mission as it received standdown instructions.

The 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry--which had been replaced in the mountains west of Chu Lai by the 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry--became the last infantry maneuver element to commence standdown. When it was ordered to the rear on the last day of October.

Division support units, including the 23d Supply and Transportation Battalion, 26th Engineer Battalion, 723d Maintenance Battalion and Division Support Command began standdown during the first week in November.

Division Headquarters and Headquarters Company was the final unit to conduct standdown activities, and as the colors are escorted to CONUS late this month, only the 196th Infantry Brigade, under the command of Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, remains.

Hester does her thing—severely

By SGT Mark A. Schulz

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. I0) – The 23d Infantry Division (Americal) quickly recovered from Typhoon Hester which had left one person dead and millions of dollars in damage to the $50 million Chu Lai Basecamp installation.

The seven camp areas in the 196th Infantry Brigade also recorded heavy storm damage in the Da Nang area as 294 buildings were damaged and 217 destroyed.

Restoration of electrical power, water supply, mess service and continuation of normal services in the Chu Lai area were given top priority as personnel from the division area continued operations for standdown.

Typhoon Hester's 115 to 120 mile per hour winds had completely destroyed 30 per cent of the Chu Lai buildings and heavy damaged 40 per cent. Fifteen per cent of the remaining buildings were able to be repaired by office personnel, as only light damage was done. The other 15 per cent remained undamaged.

No specific number was given, but heavy damage was listed to aircraft as many choppers were trapped in fallen metal structures.

Approximately 30 persons received injuries at Chu Lai as a result of the storm.

The breakdown of Typhoon Hester's destruction for the Da Nang area was as follows: Camp Crescenz, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry's home had eight buildings damaged and 11 destroyed; Camp Reasoner, 3d Battalion, 21st Infanty's home, had 72 buildings damaged and 43 destroyed; Charger South, 196th Headquarters, had 61 buildings damaged and 95 destroyed.

Charger North, Administrative Company Headquarters, had 47 buildings damaged and 20 destroyed; Redhorse, 3d Battalion, 82d Artillery's home, had 31 buildings damaged and 13 destroyed; Camp Purdue, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry's home, had 33 buildings damaged and 31 destroyed; and Camp Professional, Support Battalion Headquarters' area, had 42 buildings damaged and four destroyed.

Company A, 26th Engineer Battalion was in charge of the rebuilding task for the 196th Inf. Bde.

Saturday, Oct. 23 was the day Typhoon Hester began hitting the Chu Lai and Da Nang areas beginning about 4 a.m.

The first part of the storm passed over Chu Lai and the calmness of the eye of the storm prevailed from 11:30 to 12:15 p.m. The storm then swirled winds in the opposite direction in the Chu Lai area.

Heavy winds and rains continued throughout the evening. Winds calmed down early that evening but rains continued throughout Sturday night and early Sunday morning.

TOP LEFT -- This is what the Officers' Club looked like after Typhoon Hester did her thing at Chu Lai.

TOP RIGHT -- These three soldiers begin replacing tin on one of the 30 per cent of the lightly damaged buildings in Chu Lai shortly after Hester passed by.

LEFT -- Roofing tin lies around the headouarters area here while a latrine walls lean against senior NCOs' hooches. The latrine was completely blown off its foundation.

BOTTOM LEFT -- Vietnamese and GI workers begin replacing the tin roof of the Headquarters, 23d Infantry Division shortly after 120 mile per hour winds ended Saturday evening.

BOTTOM RIGHT -- This mess of electrical wires shows why electrical power was placed on a high priority as the wake of Hester left Chu Lai with damage estimated into the millions of dollars. **(U.S. ARMY PHOTOS BY S P4 RANDY BOMBARD)**

Memo

ories...

SERVING
THE AMERICALS
FINEST
MOBILE DX
COMPLIMENTS
OF
23RD ST BN

'Spoon Platoon' keeps serving

By SP4 Mike Cassidy

CAMP CHARGER (196th Inf. Bde. I0) -- Can a mess hall that "cooks up a storm" keep on cooking after a storm by the name of Hester knocks out its power and destroys most of the mess hall building?

The answer is yes, if you happen to be a member of the "Spoon Platoon" of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 196th Infantry Brigade.

Typhoon Hester made her presence known in the Da Nang area around 2 a.m., rattling roofing and rocking buildings. By noon of that day, her wind and rain had knocked out electrical power and telephone communications.

Shift leader Specialist Five Harold McBride (Indianapolis, Ind.) and his men came on duty at noon to be greeted with the swelling force of the storm.

The wind gradually worked toward a peak of over 90 miles an hour at the beginning of the afternoon, ripping off pieces and sections of metal roofing. The gusts were carrying the metal up the steeply sloping terrain of Camp Charger.

"Pieces of the roofing slammed into the side of the dining room all afternoon," recalls McBride. "Even though the wall was taking a beating, I didn't think the building would collapse."

Sergeant First Class Sammie Gray (Richmond, Va.) was not as optimistic. His training in Mess Steward School and personal experience had taught him to be prepared for the worst.

Despite their differnet points of view, Gray and McBride set out to prepare the evening meal. Except for clearing the table so that nothing would be broken and moving the tables away from areas where the rain was coming in, it was business as usual, until 3:30 p.m. when the roof caved in on that idea.

"There was this piece of somebody's roof that wanted to get in the mess hall and it did," explained McBride.

Though the roof started to fall in, it was prevented from hitting the floor by the electrical wiring. The dining hall roof "waved in the breeze", according to McBride, for the next four hours until the wiring gave way.

Other disasters followed, the food had to be cooked in gas stoves and on emergency fire units. Although the food was covered, the typhoon winds stirred up enough dust and debris to ruin most of the meal. Only the ham remained.

It was decided to put the food away until the storm died down. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese kitchen workers and the cooks went to the safety of the walk-in refrigerators at the rear of the mess hall.

Specialist Five Robert Piadade (St. Johnsburg, Vt.) and Specialist Four Billy Mays (Monroe, N.C.) collected sleeping gear for the Vietnamese since it was too dangerous to drive them to the gate, much less drive them home.

Many people showed up for supper as usual at 4:30 p.m. About 100 people were told to return after the Spoon Platoon had a chance to cook a hot meal.

When it became apparent that the storm was not going to let up soon, C-rations were brought out. Specialist Five William Caston (Norfolk, Va.) distributed the rations from the back of the mess hall's truck until 2 a.m. Caston stayed in the swaying truck all night. In the morning the truck had three flat tires, apparently from the flying debris.

Though they were unable to prepare a full meal, they did fill requests for coffee. McBride estimates that the Spoon Platoon prepared 25 gallons of coffee that night.

When the storm had subsided slightly, both the on-duty and off-duty shifts pitched in to get the kitchen back into working condition.

Shortly after 2 a.m. the winds stopped.

With flashlights in hand and stoves blazing away producing light as well as cooking heat, McBride's shift started preparing breakfast. The flashlights and stoves served as illumination for the job until power was restored several days later.

Even though their efforts were handicapped, a full breakfast was served, including grits, pancakes, bacon, juice, coffee and the ham that would have been served the night before.

Expecting anything in view of the provious days havoc, the men of Headquarters Company were surprised by an improvised but complete chow line set up in the kitchen.

"Hope you fellows want your eggs scrambled, 'cause that's all we've got this morning," warned Gary Gillette (Johnson City, Tenn.) as he worked the grill that morning.

Not having eggs to order was the only compromise that the cooks made.

KEEP COOKING -- Though the power may have been out, Specialist Five Harold McBride and Specialist Four Gary Gillette, both of the "Spoon Platoon", HHC, 196th Infantry Brigade, keep on cooking. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY CPT GEORGE F. HANLEY)

This dragon deadly to unknowing enemy

By SP5 Gregory Wright

CHU LAI (11th Brigade I0) -- According to Webster's New World Dictionary a dragon is a mythical monster, usually a high winged reptile which breathes out fire and wreaks destruction.

Enemy forces about 15 kilometers west of Ha Tanh recently learned they have a dragon in their midst which is far from mythical. It isn't winged and it doesn't move, it isn't even alive, but in the firepower and destruction department Firebase Red Dragon is every bit as formidable as the creature whose name it bears.

Located amid rugged mountains, this hill and its occupant provide artillery support for allied units working in the area, and have long since demonstrated the deadly nature of their guns to the VC and NVA soldiers unfortunate enough to be on the receiving end.

On Aug. 6, two 105mm's and crews of the 4th ARVN Regiment and two from Battery D, 6th Battalion, 11th Artillery moved in a and prepared for operation on the hill. They were joined two days later by two 155mm's and men of the 6th ARVN Regiment. Soon after arrival, both men and guns were ready for any action.

According to Major Broadus (Mobile, Ala.), 6th Bn., 11th Arty. commander, cooperation is the key word, and men from the different units work well together on the small fireb ase.

Performance here has been very good so far," said Broadus," "especially in the area of fire support coordination. It's rare to have three separate units working a hill this size, but in this case the idea seems to be working out quite well."

Small and remote though it is, Red Dragon is no less a threat to the enemy or source of welcome for allies. It's not much and the men who serve there might occasionally joke about it or complain, but their guns are ready for anything, day or night.

Recognition remedy hit

By SP4 Sam Rousso

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. I0) -- Lately, the GI here in Vietnam has been suffering, it is claimed, from a lack of recognition, for a number of reasons.

The command of the 196th Infantry Brigade has done something to alleviate this condition for the men of the 196th--the "Chargers".

"It is an incentive for good soldiers," says Command Sergeant Major Lorenzo Rivera, the brigade's top enlisted man.

Two grunts, one artilleryman and one support trooper are picked by their units, in turn, as Combat Charger, Redleg Chargers and Support Chargers every week.

The men begin their three-day terms on Mondays and Thursdays.

According to an official letter on the program, it serves to "bring the ... soldier to Brigade level in order that he may understand the vital part his unit plays in the combat mission of this Brigade" as well as provide recognition.

Since this program is for outstanding soldiers only, there is strict criteria for the selection of the men.

To qualify, the man must be either an E-3 or E-4; must be assigned to and performing duties in either a service (Support) fire support (Redleg) or rifle or recon platoon (Combat); must not have any derogatory information in his personnel file, an Article 15 or a court martial.

In addition, the soldier must have been in his unit for not less than three months and not longer than ten months.

During his stint as a sort of "King for Three Days," the honored Charger attends briefings, visits brigade units and tours the area of operations with Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, commanding general. He also visits staff sections and gets briefings on their functions, and eats with General McDonough.

In addition, he assists in the reception of visitiors and takes part in all functions that will make him more knowledgeable of the brigade's operations.

As a bonus, the honored Charger receives a letter of commendation from General McDonough.

Scholarships available

WASHINGTON (ANF)— The U.S. Army Educational Assistance Program will award four-year college scholarships in 1972 to qualifying dependent children of active-duty personnel.

The U.S. Army merit and special scholarships will be offered to dependent students selected through the testing facilities of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation in its annual merit program, subject to approval by Headquarters, Department of the Army.

The 1972 program involves candidates who took the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Vickii Smith kneels on a surfboard on the beach line at Chu Lai. Vickii was at Chu Lai with the Australian Capers last year. (PHOTO BY J02 J.R. STEVENS)

Nowhere Man is RTOs life

By SP4 Sam Rousso

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. I0) – According to the song written, recorded and made popular by the Beatles, Specialist Four Thomas H. Stedding (Baltimore), who leads what a lot of us might call an unexciting life here, is a "Nowhere Man".

Stedding is a draftee who was a clerk at an A&P supermarket before he entered the Army. Presently, he's a Radio Telephone Operator (RTO) in the 196th Infantry Brigade's S-3 Aviation Section.

After entering the Army Nov. 30, 1970, he traveled a not-unusual route for a soldier–Basic Combat Training (BCT) Advanced individual Training (AIT) and Vietnam.

His particular AIT was five months long. At the end of it, after attending schools at Ft. Dix, N.J. and Ft. Gordon, Ga., he was a teletype operator.

When Stedding arrived in the Republic of Vietnam, there weren't any slots for teletype operators, so the Army made him an RTO.

A lot of people, including Stedding, might think the job he has is dull and brab, but necessary. "We control slicks and hooks resupplying units in the field," he smilingly says of his job. "I can tell these polots where to go and what to do all the time."

Sometimes a very real urgency crops up in Stedding's work. "Once a bird went down right outside Hill 350. Three of us–Staff Sergeant William Sears (St. Petersburg, Fla.), Specialist Four Fred Hug (Omaha, Neb.) and myself--were on duty. We got a dustoff bird there fast. The crew was in the dustoff chopper seven minutes after their own bird went down."

In spite of an infrequent emergency which may mean life or death, Stedding, along with many other "nowhere men", continues to do his job in a professional manner.

When you ask him about it, he says, "I guess putting a lot into your job makes the time go that much faster–so it seems that much sooner that you go home. And that's what I want to do–put in my time and go home."

And that ain't nowhere, man.

CHOPPER CALL--Specialist Four Thomas H. Stedding (Baltimore) listens intently as a helicopter pilot reports his present location and destination. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY CPT GEORGE F. HANLEY)

PSYOPs aid cause make Viet boy rich

By SP4 Mike Cassidy

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. I0) – "We will pay you for information about weapons, ammunition or explosives that you find around your village," explained the Vietnamese interpreter of the 7th Psychological Operations Detachment (PSYOP).

A young boy, hearing the speech, moved slowly through the crowd at the village of Phu Loc on Go Noi Island. He stood for some time watching the PS YOP team examine a small amount of rifle ammunition that some of the villagers had brought.

When the boy finally overcame his doubts, his secret would make the Volunteer Informant Program (VIP) a success in Phu Loc and make him the richest boy in the village.

By offering to pay for information about arms, ammunition and explosives from villagers, VIP deprives Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces of potential weapons.

Sergeant James Dixon (San Antonio, Tex.) of the PSYOP team remembers seeing the boy watching the proceedings.

"By the way he was standing there, I could see that he had something he wanted to tell us," said Dixon.

After the boy overcame his hesitancy, he told the Americans about a 500-pound bomb that he had found in the hills. He then led the PS YOP team to the location about a kilometer behind the village where he, and a couple of friends, had moved the device.

Payment for explosives is made when it is carried away. Unfortunately, payment could not be made that day because, in the words of Dixon, "I wasn't about to touch the thing."

Dixon and the other members of the PSYOP team, Specialist Fours Lawrence Spencer (Seattle), Lawrence Ray (Oakland, Calif.) and James Miller (Durham, N.C.), explained to the boy that they would pay him as soon as they could get someone to examine the bomb.

Dixon points out that the boy's decision was a difficult one in view of enemy propaganda claiming mistreatment by Americans. The one incident managed to change the attitude of the villagers toward the team.

A few days later an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team arrived to examine, dismantel and move the bomb. When it was discovered to be intact, the boy was given 5000 piasters.

Case 1

On Nov. 9, Private First Class Bennie Mistrette, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, was tried and convicted by Court-Martial for disobeying the order of an non-commissioned officer to go to a listening post.

He was sentenced by the court to be reduced to the lowest enlisted rank, confined at hard labor for one month, and forfeit $100 for one month.

Case 2

On Nov. 9, Private Xanthames Sledge, 523d Signal Battalion, was tried and convicted by Court-Martial for assault with a deadly weapon and carrying a concealed weapon.

He was sentenced by the court to be reduced to the lowest enlisted rank, confined at hard labor for the period of three months and forfeit $100 per month for three months.

General answers questions on MVA

WASHINGTON (ANF)—Lt. Gen. George I. Forsythe, special assistant for a Modern Volunteer Army, made the following remarks in answer to questions presented to a panel on the MVA at the annual meeting of the Association of the United States Army in Washington, D.C.

Introduction:

"A lot of people think that the Modern Volunteer Army program is a give-away program, and that it's brand new. As a matter of fact it has its roots in history. When an army or navy of long ago took care of its soldiers you could expect an extra measure of performance from them.

"In the MVA program, while there are some things being done for our soldiers, an improved performance is expected — improved self-discipline, improved responsiveness to orders and improved behavior."

What is the difference between the U.S. Army and the Modern Volunteer Army?

"I think the question reflects the serious concern that probably exists throughout the Army that we've got the old Army and the Modern Volunteer Army. But certainly in our thinking and in the thrust of the program there'll be one Army. It'll be as great as the old Army was and it'll be even greater facing the challenges and opportunities of the future.

"It is a return to basics, getting back to all the things that I've heard for years in Fourth of July speeches about the great strength of the American soldier, his individuality, his ability to innovate, to make do without anything, his ability to think on his feet and not be an automaton.

"The Modern Volunteer Army and the U.S. Army are one and the same thing. It's a stronger Army; it's an Army attuned to our times and to the good values of the American youth—and there are many of those. It's an Army that's up to speed with the challenge of the '70s."

What about the Modern Volunteer Army is not cosmetic?

"We think all of our soldiers come from the 50 states. They don't. They all come from one state, and that's Missouri.

"You can tell soldiers you trust them, you can tell them they're mature young men, and you can tell them you expect them to act like mature men and be responsible; but you've got to behave toward them like that.

"The beer in the barracks was recommended by a command sergeant major who said 'Treat the young soldier like a man who can be trusted. Trust him with a can of 3.2 beer in his living room and watch and see what happens.' It was an item of trust. It was a message to a soldier, not just words, not just saying 'We trust you,' but trusting him.

"The same thing is true with the pass restrictions and the travel restrictions. The travel restriction of 250 miles on weekends in the jet age just doesn't make sense when a man can go from Ft. Benning, Ga., to New York City in an hour and 35 minutes. As long as he's back and ready for duty Monday morning, that's the important thing.

"While they appear to be cosmetic, I know that General Westmoreland designed those policies to be messages to soldiers that the Army trusts the mature, dependable young men who form most of the Army's ranks."

How does the Modern Volunteer Army affect or encompass the Reserve Components as well as the Active Army?

"We have to translate many of the things that we're doing for the Active Army into the Reserves. Our training program has to be much better. The equipment now coming in gives those citizen soldiers something to work with. I think the leadership in the National Guard and Reserves is showing signs of being tuned up. They're paying more attention to their soldiers and giving them a tougher and more professional challenge.

"I see the day when the Reserves almost become members of the Active Army units, when you can serve the Active Army and go right home and serve in the same outfit in the Reserves, and when there's a much closer association between Active Army units and the National Guard units of like kinds, when the National Guard has its home post.

"I think we need a real marriage between the National Guard, the Reserves and the Active Army."

Conclusion:

"I would like to comment on the difference between the Modern Volunteer Army program and VOLAR.

"The Modern Volunteer Army program is the whole program hammered out by the secretary and the chief to make the Army better. It involves no-cost and some-cost things.

"VOLAR is a resource-supported experiment conducted in fiscal year 1971 at four posts and this fiscal year at 15 posts to try to find those things that you could put money into that most contribute to improved professionalism, improved pride, esprit de corps, better living, and better regard for our soldiers.

"The terms are used interchangeably — they shouldn't be. VOLAR will probably phase out at the end of this fiscal year. We are now striving to build a Modern Volunteer Army, and the effort to strengthen professionalism and improve Army life will continue long after the disappearance of VOLAR."